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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE
WASHINGTON

Government Assistance to American Exporters



DISTRICT OFFICES

NEW YORK: Room 409 United States Customhouse
BOSTON: Eighteenth Floor United States Customhouse
CHICAGO: 629 Federal Building
ST. LOUIS: 402 Third National Bank Building
ATLANTA: 521 Post Office Building
NEW ORLEANS: 1020 Hibernia Bank Building
SAN FRANCISCO: 307 United States Customhouse
SEATTLE: 922 Alaska Building

COOPERATING OFFICES

CINCINNATI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
CLEVELAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
DETROIT BOARD OF COMMERCE
LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
DAYENPORT COMMERCIAL CLUB
C., N. O., & T. P. Ry. (Freight Department), Cincinnati.



WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1916

What the Bureau Does.

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is charged by law with the duty of "developing the various manufacturing industries of the United States and markets for their products at home and abroad, by gathering and publishing useful information, or by any other available method."

The Bureau is a clearing house for commercial information of all kinds, and has a well-organized and efficient system for its collection and distribution.

The Bureau furnishes American manufacturers and exporters definite information as to specific opportunities to sell their goods in foreign countries. (See p. 5.)

It edits and publishes consular reports on commercial subjects.

It tabulates and publishes statistics of American trade with foreign countries.

It collects, translates, and publishes customs tariffs of foreign countries.

It formulates instructions for the commercial work of the consular service.

It has a corps of commercial agents who visit foreign countries and make reports upon special industries and special phases of commerce.

It maintains a staff of 10 commercial attachés, stationed in the principal countries of the world, who devote all their time to commercial studies.

It has district offices in New York, Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, Atlanta, and St. Louis, through which it disseminates trade information and keeps in touch with the commercial interests of the country.

Sources of Foreign Trade Facts.

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce has three principal sources from which it obtains trade information from foreign countries.

Consular Service.—The United States Government maintains abroad nearly 300 consular offices and in addition many agencies. These consular officers furnish the Bureau a great fund of information relating to the trade of their districts, including annual reviews of commerce, special reports called for by the Department of Commerce, lists of importers, notices of bids for contract work, requests of merchants to be placed in communication with American exporters, etc.

Commercial agents.—Most of these men are taken from active work in some particular industry or some special branch of commerce and are experts

in their respective lines. They travel widely and make reports as to methods of manufacture and special requirements in the lines that they are investigating.

Commercial attachés.—While stationed at one post like the consular officer, the commercial attaché is free to travel within the field to which he is assigned. He has but one function—the facilitation of commerce between the United States and the country to which he is assigned. Each attaché speaks the language of the country in which he is located and is thoroughly conversant with its commercial usages.

In addition, the Bureau receives numerous official and other publications from foreign countries, which are utilized in answering requests for information. It also avails itself of trade journals published in this country and of the assistance of commercial organizations.

Publications.

Information collated by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is distributed chiefly through its publications, which include a daily trade journal and monthly, quarterly, annual, and special bulletins.

Announcements of specific opportunities for the sale of American goods abroad and other matters of a confidential character are furnished only to American firms, through the "Trade Opportunity" service and the confidential bulletins and circulars of the Bureau.

Commerce Reports, a daily journal, contains articles submitted by consular officers and commercial agents of the Department of Commerce and trade information from other sources. It is the organ through which current information on foreign trade matters is distributed to American business men. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing office, Washington, D. C., for \$2.50 per year. (Subscriptions will also be received at the district offices.) The annual reports of consular officers, formerly published in this daily journal, are now issued as supplements to it and are mailed to all subscribers to Commerce Reports.

Monthly Summary of Foreign Commerce gives the imports and exports of the United States by articles, quantities, and values for the month of

issue and for the accumulated period of the year ending with the month of issue, with comparative figures for corresponding periods in the two preceding years. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for 15 cents per copy or \$1.50 a year.

Imports Entered for Consumption, which is issued quarterly, gives a detailed statement of the quantity and value of imports into the United States, the rates of duty, and the amount of duty collected. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for 75 cents a year; single copies, 15 to 25 cents.

Commerce and Navigation, an annual volume of about 900 quarto pages, gives detailed statistics of the foreign trade of the United States, stating the countries to which each article or class of articles was exported and from which each article or class of articles was imported during a five-year period. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for \$1.

Statistical Abstract of the United States, an annual volume of about 800 pages, contains a condensed statement of the commerce, production, industries, population, finance, currency, and wealth of the country, with summary statements of the commerce of the principal foreign countries. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents for 50 cents.

Bulletins on Special Subjects.

Special bulletins published by the Bureau embrace a wide range of subjects. Some present a survey of the entire world's markets for certain lines of goods; others contain an intensive study of particular fields and particular lines; still others furnish a general study of some country or groups of countries.

Bulletins have been issued on the cotton-goods trade of almost every country in the world; other bulletins deal with cottonseed oil, lumber, shoes and leather, machine tools, paints and varnishes, motor vehicles, musical instruments, canned goods, etc.

Special handbooks have been issued on Australia, New Zealand, Russia, South America, Dominican Republic, Canada, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Philippines, British India, etc. Still other special publications deal with such subjects as foreign credits, packing, and transportation rates.

Trade Directories.

Trade directory work is an important branch of the Bureau's service to American exporters. In 1911 was issued a World Trade Directory, giving the names of importers in all countries of the world. This volume is now out of print, but may be consulted at the district offices, which also have the revised lists that are constantly being received from consular officers.

In 1914 the Bureau issued a revision of the South American section of the directory (428 pages), with a uniform classification of dealers and importers. This can be bought from the Superintendent of Documents for \$1.

A revision of the directory of Central America and the West Indies is in press and others will be taken up later.

The district offices of the Bureau have on hand American trade directories and directories of foreign countries that will prove of material assistance to exporters.

Trade Opportunity Service.

Announcements of specific opportunities for the sale of American goods abroad are published in Commerce Reports. The names and addresses of the foreign importers desiring the goods are not given in these announcements, but are furnished to bona fide American firms upon application to the Bureau at Washington or to any of the district offices.

In applying for such names and addresses the inquirer need refer only to the number of the announcement as published in the Daily. A separate application on the firm's letterhead should be made for each "opportunity" desired.

When the confidential information furnished regarding an opportunity for sales in foreign countries is too detailed to be given in a "trade opportunity" announcement, it is embodied in a confidential bulletin or circular, which is sent to firms that are listed in the Trade Index files maintained by the Bureau and its district offices.

Samples, specifications, etc., that accompany reports by consular officers and commercial agents are sent to the district offices for limited periods and can be inspected by those interested.

Foreign Tariff Information.

The Division of Foreign Tariffs has on file the customs tariffs of all foreign countries, usually in official editions, and the customs laws, regulations, and decisions of the principal countries of the world. It also receives the official gazettes of most foreign countries, so that the tariff information distributed by the Bureau, either in the form of special tariff publications or by correspondence, is derived largely from official sources.

The Bureau is equipped to answer inquiries in regard to rates of duty, customs regulations, internal-revenue taxes, license fees for commercial travelers and customs treatment of their samples, consular regulations, and commercial agreements of foreign countries.

In addition to publishing translations of foreign customs tariffs and special compilations of rates of duty on groups of products in all foreign countries, the Bureau gives notice of current tariff changes, as well as proposed changes, through the foreign tariff notes in Commerce Reports. These notes are assembled quarterly and published under the title of "Foreign Tariff Notes." The other tariff publications of the Bureau are known as "Tariff Series."

In writing for information in regard to foreign rates of duty, it is necessary to give a detailed description of the article involved and to specify the particular country or countries for which tariff information is desired. It is advisable to confine inquiries to information needed immediately rather than to ask for comprehensive statements for future reference, which may be out of date by the time they are used.

While the district offices of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce are supplied with the tariff publications issued by the Bureau, they are not in a position to give authoritative information in regard to foreign tariffs. Tariff inquiries should therefore, whenever possible, be addressed to the main office in Washington.

A collection of foreign trade-mark and patent laws is now being made up by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce for the purpose of answering inquiries in regard to those subjects.

The District Office Can Help You.

District offices of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce were established to expedite the distribution of commercial information, to ascertain the needs of the business men of the country, and to establish closer cooperation between Government and private agencies interested in the extension of foreign trade.

Each district office has on file confidential information regarding trade opportunities, lists of importers in foreign countries, trade directories, etc.

Each district office receives specifications, samples, exhibits, etc., for a limited time, and these may be inspected by interested persons.

Each district office arranges conferences between exporters and consular officers and commercial agents when the latter visit district offices during leave of absence in this country.

Each district office makes a special study of the needs of the district in which it is located, and the Bureau endeavors to equip each of its districts to meet the demands peculiar to their fields.

Each district office keeps on file all publications of the Bureau, as well as publications of other branches of the Government, that will be of assistance to American exporters. Each office acts as sales agent for the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., for the sale of the Bureau's publications.

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is the American business man's bureau and is able and ready to serve your interests.

Suggestions to Exporters.

Visit or write the district office in your district and learn what it has and what it can do for you.

Get your name on the Trade Index, so you will receive the Bureau's confidential information on foreign trade.

Build up a library of publications on your line of business. The Government will furnish you its publications at cost, and in them you may find the solution to some of your business problems.

Subscribe for Commerce Reports, so you may be able to get promptly the announcements of opportunities for the sale of goods in foreign lands and to keep informed concerning commercial and

industrial conditions the world over. Subscriptions (at \$2.50 per year) will be received at the district offices, or may be sent direct to the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.

Write the district office about your export problems. The Bureau through its districts aims to meet your needs, to serve your interests. The more it knows about your problems, the more effectively it can assist you.

Consult the district office in your district before addressing requests for information to American consular officers. Frequently the Bureau and its district offices have on file just the information you desire. Thus you will save time and expense.

Make arrangements with the Bureau or its district offices for conferences with consular officers and commercial agents. These officials can furnish you information of great value. You, in turn, can aid them in making their work more effective.

Participate with the commercial organizations to which you belong in the work of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce and its district offices. Every commercial association can, by cooperation with the Bureau, prove an effective agency in the development of American trade in foreign countries.

Consult the district office in your district concerning your plans for entering the foreign-trade field. From it you can ascertain what countries are the largest importers of the articles you produce, and what countries are now supplying the demand, where American exporters in your line have met with success, the usual conditions as to credits, packing, etc.

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